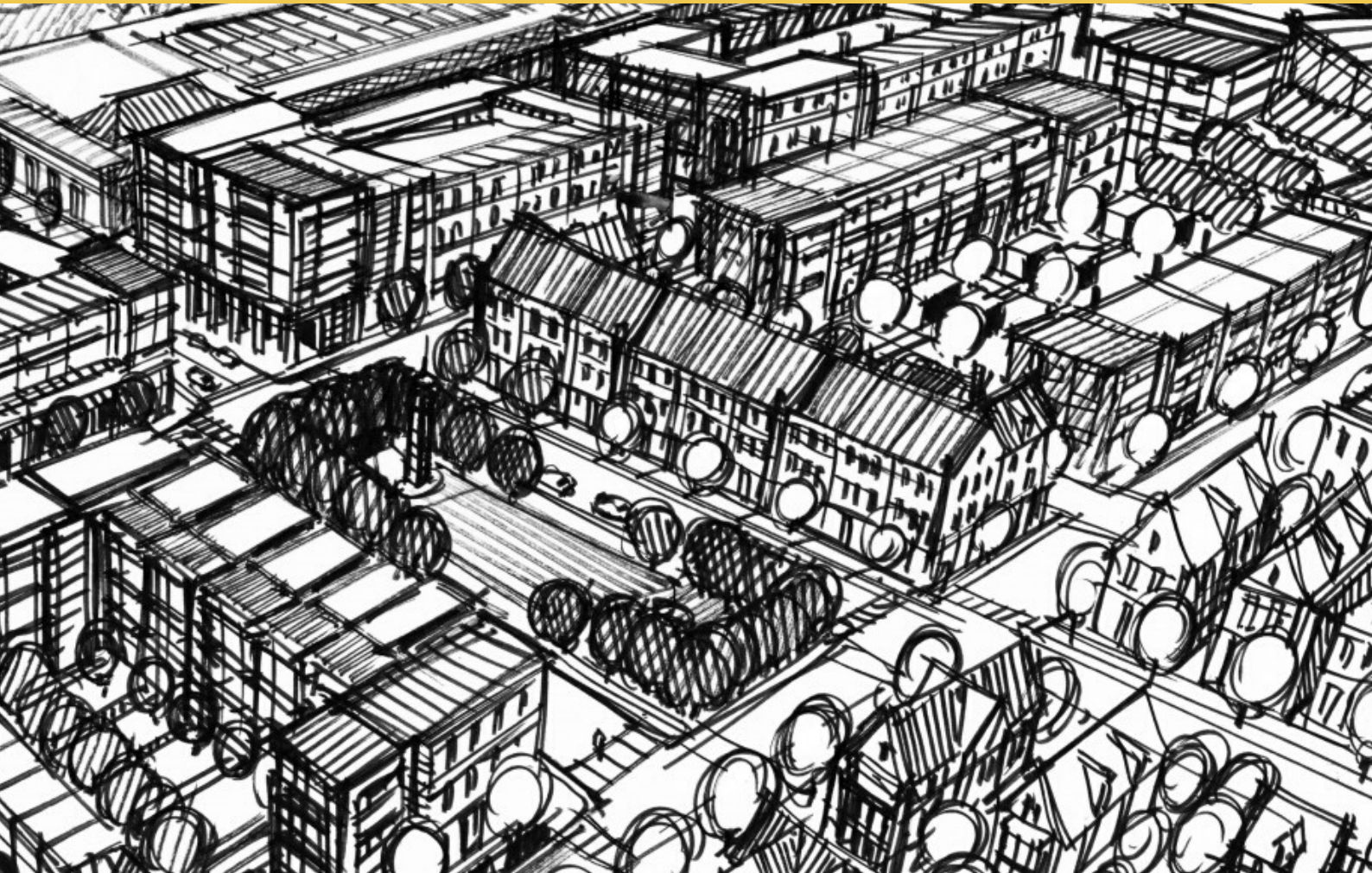


CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
JOSEPH A. CURTAONE, MAYOR



# **24 CROSS STREET EAST & 165 BROADWAY**

## **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**



**PROPOSAL DUE:  
FEBRUARY 21, 2020**

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



*Request for Information (RFI)*

# INVITATION

The City of Somerville, through the economic development division of the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (“OSPCD”), invites proposals from qualified applicants with creative strategies for redevelopment two City-owned properties located at 24 Cross Street East and 165 Broadway.

The RFI seeks proposals to re-use two City assets in a manner that’s consistent with the values and priorities of Somerville as articulated in SomerVision, the City’s comprehensive plan. SomerVision grew from a three-year effort where residents articulated a comprehensive vision for job creation, affordable housing, open space, transit, environmental stewardship, equity, education and other goals aimed at keeping all our residents and businesses flourishing.

The proposals generated by the RFI will be used by the community and City to better understand potential partnerships, to re-imagine the area by creating an innovative, exciting project that will be an attractive addition to the community that strives to address the vision and need of affordability that makes Somerville accessible for all.

We invite you to become a part of our vision and strongly encourage proposals to follow these principles to the extent possible.

# Project Vision

The City is seeking responses from creative thinkers and visionary developers, cooperatives, non-profit agencies, residents, entrepreneurs and other entities to propose dynamic, creative, but feasible ideas to redevelop and repurpose these City-owned assets. The ideas must encourage design of a strong neighborhood structure that can be flexible enough to adapt to change over time. We encourage proposals providing unique solutions for an underserved population in the low to moderate income community.

The primary purpose of this RFI is to identify creative proposals to encourage the redevelopment of vacant City-owned property located at 24 Cross Street East. The property at 165 Broadway is included in this RFI in order to encourage creative strategies and consider flexible proposals to remake the Cross Street East corridor. Proposals that consider the reuse of 165 Broadway must clearly outline a strategy to relocate the current tenants and a viable long term setting for their continued operation. This might include renovating the building at 24 Cross Street East with the intention of relocating the tenants from 165 Broadway in order to realize a more robust development at 165 Broadway. Other creative scenarios are welcome for consideration.

## Objectives

The City is seeking projects, including but not limited to some or all of the following:

- Arts and Maker Uses
- Artist live/work
- Collaborative Workspace
- Community Innovation Center
- Workforce Housing
- Mix of uses beneficial to neighbors that could help to contribute to a "sense of place"



# Neighborhood



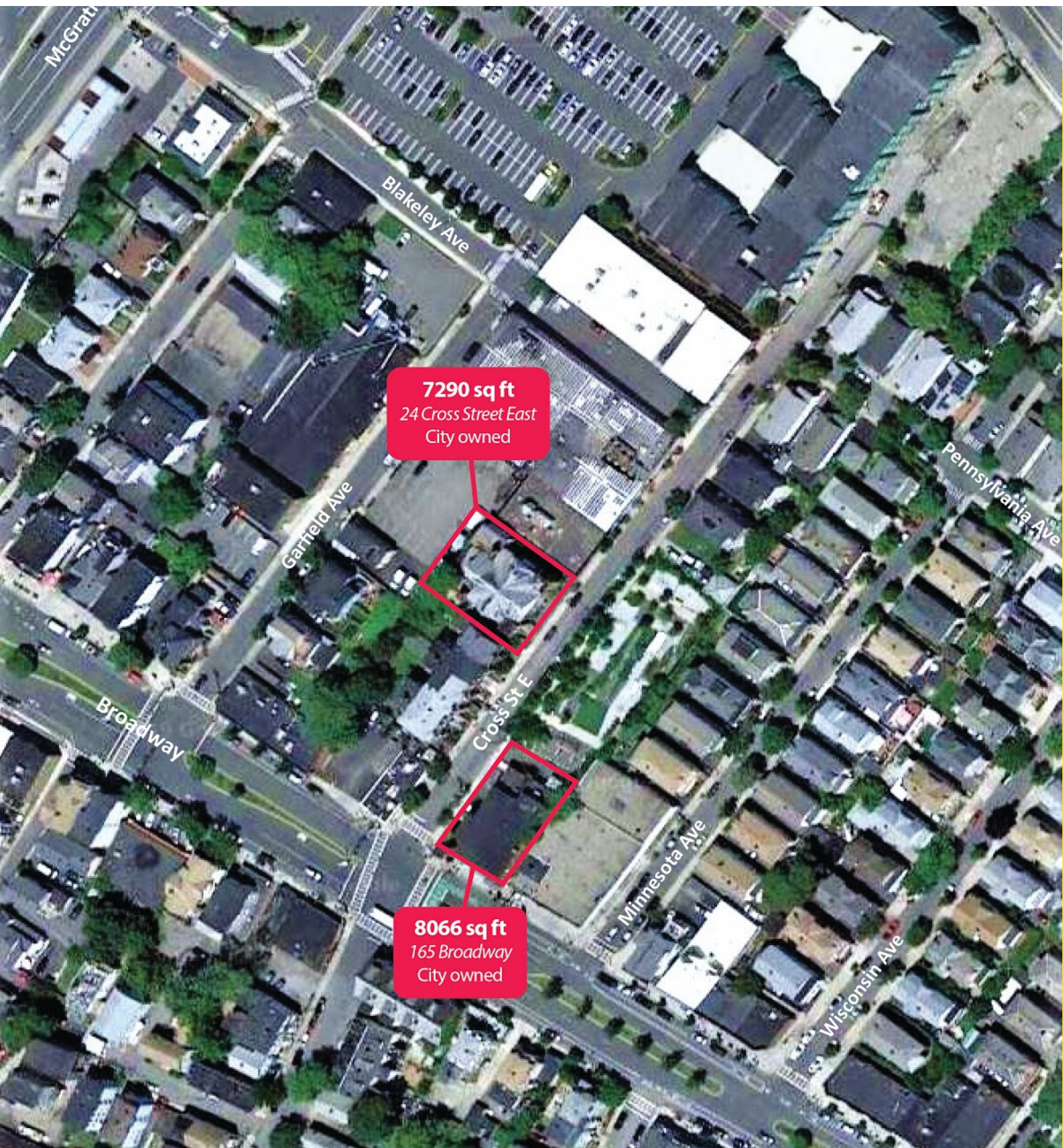
East Somerville is one of the oldest and most densely populated areas of Somerville. This primarily residential neighborhood features one of the city's most dynamic and diverse commercial districts. The district features almost 150 ethnically and culturally diverse businesses that reflect Somerville's rich history as an immigrant city. The district is anchored by two cultural institutions, the East Branch of the Somerville Public Library and MudFlat Studios, a nationally-recognized, 14,000 square foot pottery studio that hosts artists and offers classes, workshops, outreach programming and events focusing on the ceramic arts. East Somerville is an emerging cultural destination that has a sense of energy and optimism that pulses through the neighborhood with community festivals, ethnic eateries and stores.

The site is a fifteen minute walk from two MBTA Orange Line stations (Assembly Square and Sullivan Station) and the future East Somerville Green Line Station, which is scheduled to open by the end of 2021. The neighborhood is adjacent to regional roadways including McGrath Highway, Washington Street and Interstate 93, which connects East Somerville to Sullivan Square, Cambridge and Downtown Boston. Minutes away are also Inner Belt, Somerville's largest industrial district, Brickbottom, home of the Brickbottom Artists Association and the City's newest public space, ArtFarm as well as the burgeoning Union Square and Assembly Row.





# Prospective Project Sites





# 24 Cross Street East

**Current Zoning: Civic (CIV)**

**Neighborhood: Ward 1**

The 24 Cross Street East property sits on roughly 7,581 square feet in a mixed commercial/residential neighborhood in East Somerville. The building is a wood-framed masonry structure containing roughly 16,018 square feet, including a 5,152 sq. ft. basement.

City staff will work with a future developer to establish zoning that implements the project, pending community process and support.

Allowable uses include: public service, performance space, recreation services, and non-profit educational uses.

Dimensional Requirements: Size of lot may limit the types of civic spaces allowed, but otherwise there are no prescribed dimensional requirements.



# 165 Broadway

**Current Zoning: Civic (CIV)**

**Neighborhood: Ward 1**

The 165 Broadway property sits on a 8,937 square foot parcel on the corner of Broadway and Cross Street East. The two-story brick and masonry historic fire station was constructed in 1895 and contains 10,947 sq. ft., including the 3,460 sq. ft. basement. Tenants include Teen Empowerment Somerville (youth center), the Cross Street Senior Center, City municipal offices, and a large meeting space available for community use.

Any submitted proposal must clearly detail a plan for relocating and rehousing all of the uses found in this building. City staff will work with a future developer to establish zoning that implements the project, pending community support.

Allowable uses include: public service, performance space, recreation services, and non-profit educational uses.

Dimensional Requirements: Size of lot may limit the types of civic spaces allowed, but otherwise there are no prescribed dimensional requirements.



# Proposal Format

## A. Your Organization

Include the following:

1. Address, primary contact person, and email
2. What is your organization's unique value proposition and/or mission?
3. Describe similar projects or proposals your organization has conceived, developed or supported, if any. What was your role?

## B. Project Narrative

Include the following:

1. Describe your proposed project vision.
  - a. Programming and uses
  - b. Site and space requirements, if applicable
  - c. Strategy to relocate existing uses
  - d. Potential partnerships
2. Who are the audiences you are seeking to serve? How do you prioritize low-income communities and/or protected classes?
3. What research have you conducted or used to develop your vision?
4. What are the potential benefits, qualitative or quantitative, to Somerville and/or immediate neighborhood? (i.e. local jobs, public access, educational resources, public art, community center, etc).
5. What barriers would you have to execute your project vision? (i.e. economic, technical, or regulatory).
6. Define the stages and process for development, funding sources and the suitability and cost for your project.
7. How could the City of Somerville best support the proposed project?



# Effect of this RFI

This RFI is for information and planning purposes only and shall not be construed as a solicitation or as an obligation on the part of the City to issue any competitive procurement or award a contract. The City will not award a contract on the basis of responses to this RFI nor otherwise pay for the preparation of any information submitted, for any vendor presentation, or the City's use of such information. All responses to this RFI will be public record under the Massachusetts' Public Records Law, Mass. Gen. L. ch. 66 s. 10, regardless of confidentiality notices to the contrary.

## Submission Instructions

To submit proposals or for more information please contact Sunayana Thomas, Senior Economic Development Planner at [stthomas@somervillema.gov](mailto:stthomas@somervillema.gov).

Proposals are due by February 21, 2020. Please follow and address the proposal format and do not exceed ten (10) pages.